



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/468,222	12/20/1999	DAVID ALLEN	002880.P001C	3372

7590 02/08/2006  
James H Salter  
Blakely Sokoloff Taylor & Zafman LLP  
12400 Wilshire Boulevard  
7th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

EXAMINER

LE, UYEN T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2163

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/468,222

Applicant(s)

ALLEN ET AL.

Examiner

Uyen T. Le

Art Unit

2163

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 21-59 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 21-59 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 14 Oct 2005.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 25 August 2005 has been entered.

### ***Response to Amendment***

2. Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but they are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office Action.

3. Claims 1, 21-59 are pending and rejected.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is not clear how an action to be taken by an information object is executed by the user.

The art rejection is applied to claim 30 as best understood in light of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph discussed above.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 23-28, 30-32, 36, 39, 41, 42, 47, 49, 57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lai et al "Object Lens: a spreadsheet for cooperative work", ACM 1989, pages 332-353, provided by the applicant.

Regarding claim 1, the claimed apparatus reads on the Object Lens system of Lai (see pages 348-350). The claimed user input device and user output device have to be present in the system of Lai since it is a computer system for users to share tasks. The claimed parser to identify a keyword in the input message, to associate the input message to an information object associated with the keyword and to classify the message as a particular message reads on the fact that Object Lens sorts messages into folders according to who is to perform a task, which project it involves and so forth (see 4.1 Task Tracking). The claimed keyword is met by the task or project. The claimed information object associated with the keyword is met by the person performing the task. The claimed "indication of an action to be taken by the information object in response to the message from the user" is met by the fact that any task involves an action to be taken by the person asked to perform the task.

Claim 36 essentially recites the user interface, parser and output device of claim 1. The claimed "plurality of information objects, each information object coupled to one

or more keyword" is met by the plurality of people performing a task (see 4.1, page 348).

Claim 49 essentially recites a method for the system claim 1, thus is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 1 above.

Regarding claim 57, the claimed system is met by the Object Lens of Lai, which uses an intelligent message sorting system to disseminate engineering change notices to the appropriate people in an organization (see 4.2, pages 348-349). Lai discloses a plurality of keywords (Parts affected, type of change, severity, page 349), each associated with one or more information objects (engineering change notice), each information object designed to execute one or more action (change notices clearly involves actions to be executed), the keyword including an alias created by a user to customize the user's interaction with the system (Figure 9).

Claim 23 merely reads on the fact that each person asked to perform a task is assigned by the user in the Object Lens system of Lai (see pages 348-349).

Regarding claim 24, the action to be taken by each person is clearly based upon the contents of the input message other than the keyword since the keyword is simply a task or project.

Regarding claim 25, Lai discloses the action combines data from the input message with data extracted from other sources determined by the information object (see Figure 1).

Regarding claims 26, 39, Lai discloses querying one or more data sources (see Figure 7).

Regarding claim 27, Lai discloses providing the indication of the action after the message is completely entered but before the message is sent when Lai shows the user enters a message asking a person to perform a task (see 4.1).

Regarding claim 28, the system of Lai has to present output to indicate presence of the keyword to the user since the message indicate the task or project (see 4.1).

Claims 30, 31, 32 merely recite intended use of the user input device. The input device in the system of Lai clearly allows users interactions and selection before dispatching the message (see Figures 1-2).

Regarding claim 41, the user in the systems of Lai clearly may override the selection of the information object since the user distributes tasks to people in cooperative work (see 4.1).

Regarding claim 42, Lai discloses one or more aliases for the keyword created by the user to enable customization (see Figure 9).

Regarding claim 47, the claimed first and second devices are met by the different user devices in the cooperative work environment of Lai (see the abstract).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 21, 22, 29, 33-35, 37, 38, 40, 43-46, 48, 50-56, 58, 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lai et al "Object Lens: a spreadsheet for cooperative work", ACM 1989, pages 332-353, provided by the applicant.

Regarding claims 21, 22, although Lai does not specifically show how the parser detects the keyword and what reparsing is based on, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include any criteria depending on users requirements.

Regarding claim 29, since the system of Lai is a cooperative work system, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a mechanism to override the information object and redirect the action if deemed necessary in order to properly distribute the task.

Regarding claim 33, although Lai does not specifically show a list of keywords and actions for the user to review while composing the message, since the system allows distribution of tasks and projects to people, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed features in order to aid the user in selecting qualified people for each task or project.

Claim 53 recites an apparatus similar to the apparatus of claim 1 with the added limitation of immediately detecting the keyword as the keyword is entered. Although Lai does not specifically show when the keyword is detected, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include detecting the keyword immediately as the keyword is entered in order to recognize tasks or projects as soon as they appear in the message.

Claims 34, 56 merely recite an intended use of the user input device. Lai discloses adding an alias to keyword to customize the user's interaction with the system (see Figure 9). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the alias to invoke the information object in subsequent user messages in order to save time entering the keyword.

Claim 35 again merely recites an intended use of the user output device. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the output device of Lai to present any information required by the user.

Regarding claims 37, 38, since the system of Lai is for cooperative work, it clearly includes client devices having user interface and output device and a server. Furthermore, although Lai does not specifically show mobile client system and where the database and parser reside, since mobile systems provide flexible work environment for clients, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include mobile client devices and make the object database and parser reside at the server in order to have a centralized database to facilitate cooperative work.

Regarding claim 40, since the information object includes people performing a task, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a data repository or data source on a remote server in order to serve different clients working in a cooperative environment of Lai.

Regarding claim 43, official notice is taken that it is well known in the art to wait for confirmation prior to triggering an action. Since the system of Lai distributes work to

people, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed limitations in order to allow verification by the user.

Regarding claims 44, 45, although Lai does not specifically show continuously parsing the user input message to immediately detect the keyword and display information to the user, since the system is used to distribute tasks to people based on the keyword, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to continuously parse user input message and immediately display information upon detection of the keyword in order to take action as soon as there are tasks to distribute.

Regarding claim 46, Lai discloses the information displayed comprises an identity of information object when Lai shows the identity of a person performing the task (see 4.1).

Regarding claim 48, Lai discloses sending the message to other users (see the abstract). Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a header based on keywords in order to summarize the message.

Claims 50, 51, 54, 55 merely read on the fact that different users have different requirements for parsing. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include any parsing criteria to accommodate users' requirements.

Regarding claim 52, using a default is notoriously well known in the art. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed features while implementing the system of Lai in order to automatically assign tasks.

Regarding claims 58, 59, although Lai does not specifically show where messages are being sent, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include sending to another user or to storage depending on the message type as claimed in order to route the message to its correct destination.

***Conclusion***

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uyen T. Le whose telephone number is 571-272-4021. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic can be reached on 571-272-4023. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

3 February 2006

  
**UYEN LE**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**